

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Teesside University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship), Full time BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Apprenticeship), Full time
Approval visit date	10-11 March 2021
Case reference	CAS-16777-W5W2L2

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Anthony Power	Physiotherapist
Angela Ariu	Occupational therapist
Temilolu Odunaike	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the virtual approval visit

There were other groups involved with the approval process as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Tim Thompson	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Teesside University
Andrea Joyce	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Teesside University
Debbie Osborne	University Panel member	Teesside University
Dawn Westwood	University Panel member	Teesside University
Jackie England	University Panel member	Teesside University
Iain Baird	University Panel member	Teesside University

Lisa McKeown	University Panel member	Teesside University
Nick Pollard	External Panel member	Sheffield Hallam University
Philip Howard	External Panel member	External Practitioner (Physiotherapy)
Beverley Hingley	External Panel member	External Practitioner (Occupational Therapy)
Debbie Smith	Service User/carer representative	Teesside University
Nina Paterson	Professional body representative (Physiotherapy)	The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Reena Patel	Professional body representative (Physiotherapy)	The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Dougie Lauchlan	Professional body representative (Physiotherapy)	The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Karen Newberry	Professional body representative (Occupational Therapy)	Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Caroline Grant	Professional body representative (Occupational Therapy)	Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Patricia McClure	Professional body representative (Occupational Therapy)	Royal College of Occupational Therapists
Emma Furber	Observer	Teesside University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
First intake	01 September 2021
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02304

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involved consideration of documentary evidence and a virtual approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Apprenticeship)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Occupational therapist
First intake	01 September 2021
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02305

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involved consideration of documentary evidence and a virtual approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Facilities and resources	N/A	As the visit was carried out virtually, the facilities and resources were covered in discussions and the documentary submission.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the virtual approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 21 April 2021.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that appropriate information is available about the employment status of a learner, should they be unsuccessful on the programmes, to allow them to make an informed choice about taking up a place.

Reason: The visitors were able to view information made available to applicants regarding the programmes, both on the education provider's website and in the programme documentation. From discussions at the visit, the visitors understood that the education provider's apprenticeship manager would have regular face-to-face contacts with applicants to provide them with information that would assist them in deciding about the programmes. However, the visitors noted that there was no

information provided about what would happen to the employment status of the learners should they be unsuccessful on the programmes. Although the apprenticeship manager explained that this would be covered during face-to-face discussions with the applicants, the visitors considered that such information should be documented and made available to potential applicants to assist their decision-making about the programmes. As the visitors did not see this information within the documentation, they could not be certain that all potential applicants would have access to the information they need to make a fully informed decision about taking up a place on the programmes. Therefore, the visitors request that the education provider demonstrate how they would ensure clear and easily accessible information, particularly around possible consequences that being unsuccessful on the programme could have on their employment (if any), is provided to applicants to allow informed decision-making.

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Condition: The education provider must define the attendance requirement, how this is communicated to learners and the effective system in place to monitor the attendance of learners on the programmes.

Reason: The visitors reviewed a narrative from the programme handbooks explaining that 100 per cent attendance is required for both the academic modules and in practice-based learning. The information in the handbooks showed that learners who do not meet the attendance requirements may be deemed ineligible to take part in the assessment for that particular module or undertake a practice placement and will therefore be unable to progress to the next level of the programmes. However, the visitors noted a lack of clarity around what 100 per cent attendance meant as learners are only required to be present on campus twice a month with the rest of their “off the job” learning being completed independently. At the visit, the visitors heard that currently, all lectures are recorded and that learners must watch them. The programme team explained that there are different software systems that they would use to monitor attendance. For example, they mentioned that Blackboard Collaborate would show if a learner has not accessed any material. In which case, a member of staff would get in touch with the learner to find out the reasons for this. The visitors were also informed that the education provider would accommodate a degree of flexibility around attendance if arranged ahead of time for situations like childcare or work requirements.

For practice-based learning, the visitors noted that the handbook detailed what a learner should do if they are absent, however, there was no information provided about how the education provider would respond in the event of a learner failing below 100 per cent attendance in their practice-based learning.

From the documentary review and discussions at the visit, the visitors were still unclear how the education provider would measure what constitutes 100 per cent attendance both in theory and in practice-based learning or how it would be monitored. Although the education provider explained that they have a central attendance monitoring system, it remained unclear to the visitors what would be the trigger point for a learner not meeting the required attendance or what the consequences would be. The visitors were also unclear about how attendance would be managed and how clearly attendance requirements are communicated to learners. The visitors therefore require

further evidence defining the attendance policy, providing clarity around attendance requirements and how it would be effectively monitored on the programmes.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 06 July 2021 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).